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HEROES OF THE

WILD FRONTIER



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DAVY CROCKETT AND THE
RENEGADE PLUNDERERS



DANIEL BOONE OPENS THE GREAT
NEW FRONTIER OF KENTUCKY



BUFFALO BILL AND THE LONGEST
PONY EXPRESS RIDE IN HISTORY





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DANIEL BOONE

OPENS THE NEW FRONTIER

THE SETTLEMENT LINE ALONG THE VIRGINIA AND CAROLINA FRONTIERS HAD GROWN MORE AND MORE POPULOUS FROM 1751 TO 1786. AT THE MOUNTAIN BARRIER, THE WESTWARD MOVEMENT WAS HALTED... BUT ONLY TEMPORARILY, FOR THERE WERE ALWAYS HARDY FRONTIERSMEN ANXIOUS TO MOVE ON TO NEW AND MORE FERTILE LANDS. "THE LONG HUNTERS" WERE AMONG THE FIRST TO LOOK TOWARD THE UNKNOWN KENTUCKY COUNTRY. THESE MEN HAD GAINED THEIR NAME BECAUSE OF THE LONG PERIODS THEY SPENT HUNTING ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS... AND THE MOST FAMOUS "LONG HUNTER" OF ALL WAS DANIEL BOONE!

IN MAY, 1769, DANIEL BOONE LED SIX MEN BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS INTO THE COUNTRY SOUTH OF THE OHIO RIVER. THEY TRAVELED STEADILY WESTWARD FOR OVER A MONTH...

YOU FIGGER
WE'RE GETTIN'
NEAR THERE,
DAN'L?

WAL, THIS WAS THE GAP I WAS
HOPIN' TO FIND WHEN WE FOLLOWED
THE OLD INDIAN AND BUFFALO
TRAIL THROUGH THE MOUNTAIN PASS.
FROM THAT ROCKY SUMMIT YONDER,
WE SHOULD BE GAZING DOWN INTO
THE NEW COUNTRY!-

FROM A ROCKY RIDGE NEAR THE GAP, SUSPICIOUS,
WATCHFUL EYES ARE OBSERVING THE NEWCOMERS...

SIGNAL OUR BROTHERS THAT
THE WHITE HUNTERS APPROACH...

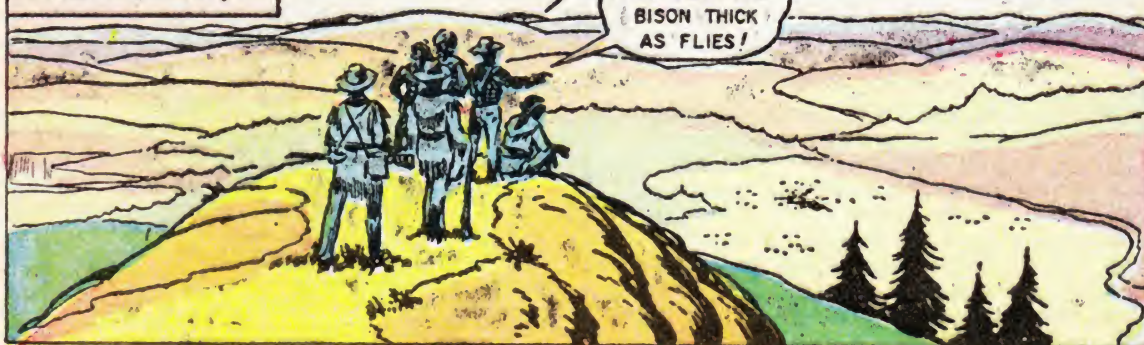


DAN'S CALCULATIONS
HAD BEEN RIGHT!
FROM THE SUMMIT,
THEY SAW SPREAD OUT
LIKE A MAP BEFORE
THEM AN IMMENSE
AND LUXURIANT
COUNTRY

WE'VE REACHED IT,
SURE-NUFF! IT'S
THE COUNTRY OF
THE "KENTUCKE"!

LOOK AT THAT LAND!
YOU CAN SEE FROM HERE
HOW ANYTHING YOU WANTED
WOULD GROW THERE!

AND DEER AND
BISON THICK
AS FLIES!



BUT IN THE MIDST OF THEIR EXULTATION,
THE KEEN EYES OF THE WOODSMEN
SUDDENLY BECAME AWARE OF AN
OMINOUS SIGN . . .

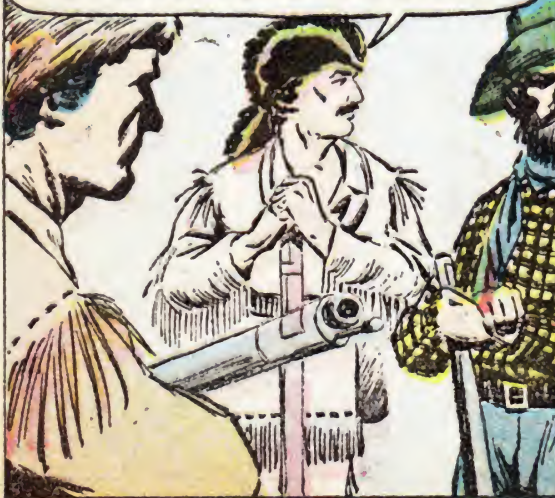
LOOK! 'YONDER! THAT'S
AN INJUN SMOKE SIGNAL,
SURE AS YOU'RE BORN!



THE 'INJUNS BEEN SPYIN' ON US AN'
TRAILIN' US EVER SINCE WE HIT THE
HILLS! WE BEEN TELLIN' YOU THAT
RIGHT ALONG, DAN'L!



WE SHOULD'VE HUNTED 'EM OUT LIKE THE REST
OF US: WANTED TO, DAN'L. IF WE DON'T FINISH
THEM OFF FIRST, THEY'LL FINISH US!



WE CAME A LONG WAY TO REACH THIS COUNTRY.
I AIN'T GOIN' TO STAND AROUND SPEECHIN' ABOUT
INDIANS WHAT AIN'T BOTHERED ME' AND SOME
SMOKE SIGNALS THAT AIN'T HURTIN' ME! THAT
SIGNAL'S JUST TO WARN THEIR BAND THAT
WE'RE AROUND! NOW LET'S GET GOING!

I SAY, LET'S GET
THEM INJUNS FIRST!





BEFORE DAN'L COULD STOP HIM, WILLIAM COOL'S GUN BLAZED TOWARD THE ROCKS ABOVE.

WILL! YOU IDIOT! NOW YOU HAVE STARTED US OFF WRONG!



THE ECHO OF WILL'S SHOT HAD SCARCELY DIED AWAY BEFORE A DELUGE OF ROCKS AND BOULDERS BEGAN TO DESCEND ON THE WOODSMEN...



FOR THE NEXT FEW HOURS ANY FRONTIERSMAN WHO EXPOSED HIMSELF WAS SENT SCURRYING FOR COVER BY A NEW HAIL OF ROCKS. THERE WAS NO WAY OF FIGHTING THIS ENEMY THEY COULDN'T SEE.



IF WILL HADN'T TAKEN THAT SHOT IN THE FIRST PLACE, WE'D HAVE BEEN DOWN ON THE PLAINS BY NOW! IF WE PLAN TO COME BACK TO THIS COUNTRY AND SETTLE, WE GOT TO MAKE FRIENDS—NOT ENEMIES—OF THE INDIANS! GET THAT THROUGH YOUR HEADS!

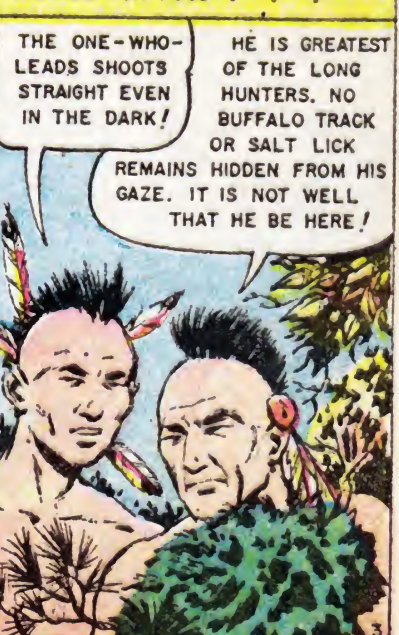
I AIN'T KNUCKLIN' DOWN TO NO REDSKINS!



IT WAS LATE WHEN DAN'L, KNOWING THEY HAD NOT SEEN THE LAST OF THE INDIANS, LED HIS MEN TO THE PLAINS...



BUT AS DAN'L AND JOHN FINLEY SCoured FOR FOOD.



LATE THAT NIGHT THE HUNGRY MEN FEASTED...

UMMMM! THIS HERE WILD TURKEY'S THE BEST I EVER TASTED!

IT'S A RICH AND WONDERFUL COUNTRY! THE WOODS ARE FULL OF GAME!

LOOK! AN INJUN! GRAB YOUR GUNS---BUSHES ARE PROB'LY FULL OF 'EM!



WITH ONE FAST MOVE JOSEPH HOLDEN MADE A DIVE FOR THE INDIAN.

I GOT YOU, YOU CREEPIN' VARMINT!



LOOK FOR THE OTHER INJUNS! I GOT MINE... AN' I AIN'T EVEN GOIN' TO WASTE A BULLET ON HIM!

WAIT, MEN! YOU, TOO, JOSEPH! HOLD IT! I DON'T BELIEVE THERE ARE ANY OTHERS!



I'M WAITIN' FOR NOTHIN'! KILL AN INJUN AFORE HE KILLS YOU, IS WHAT I'VE LEARNED!

THIS MAN AIN'T IN WAR GEAR, JOSEPH! HE MIGHT'VE COME ON A PEACEFUL MISSION. TO HARM HIM WILL BRING THE REST DOWN ON US SURE... JEST LIKE WILL GOT US IN TROUBLE TODAY!



YOU ACT LIKE YOU SEE FITTEN, DAN'L... AN' I'LL DO THE SAME! THIS INJUN'LL BE ONE LESS WE HAVE TO FIGHT WHEN THERE IS TROUBLE!

DROP THAT KNIFE, JOSEPH! I AIN'T AIMIN' TO HAVE TO POUND SOME SENSE INTO YOU!



WHY, I--I'LL LARRUP THE HIDE OFF'N YOU, DAN'L BOONE!

I GIVE YOU LEAVE TO TRY, JOSEPH... BUT I DON'T ADVISE IT! GET OFF THAT MAN AN' MAYBE WE CAN FIND OUT WHAT HE'S DOIN' HERE!

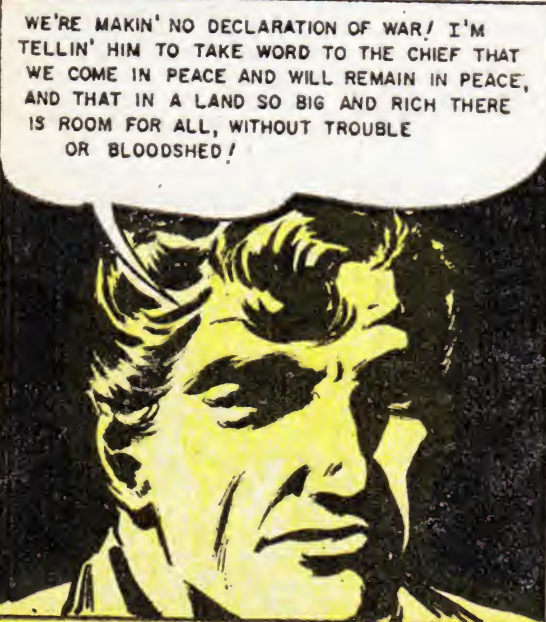
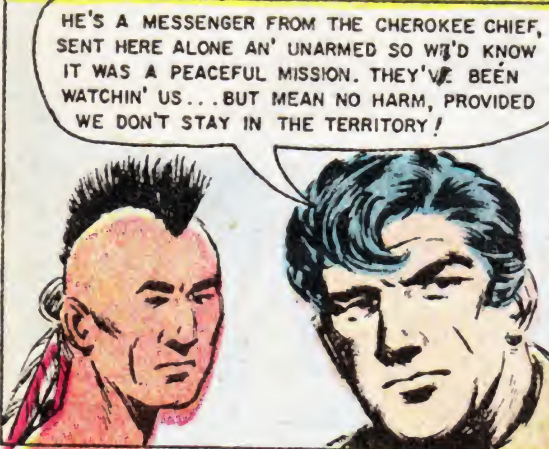




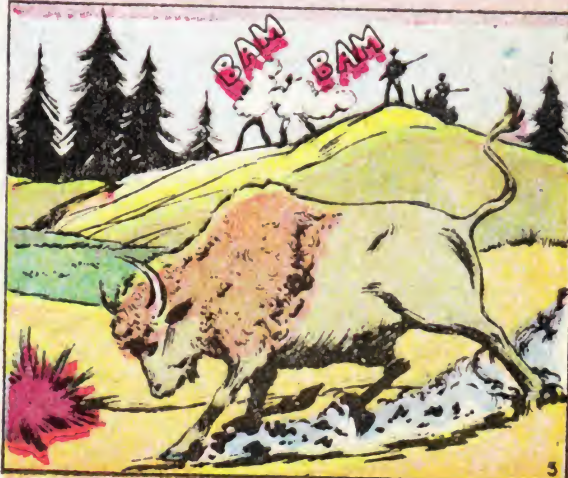
DAN'L WAS AN EASY-MOVING, SOFT-SPOKEN MAN, BUT WHEN THE OCCASION DEMANDED HE ACTED WITH LIGHTNING-LIKE SWIFTNESS. AS JOSEPH HOLDEN PLUNGED TOWARD HIM



DAN'L TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE INDIAN AND WAS SOON ABLE TO PIECE HIS WORDS TOGETHER...



THE NEXT MORNING THE WOODSMEN CONTINUED THEIR JOURNEY, EVER MOVING FORWARD, THE WEEKS GOING BY AS THEY HUNTED AND EXPLORED, ALWAYS MARVELING AT THE VASTNESS AND POSSIBILITIES OF THE LAND AROUND THEM



THE WEEKS
HAD GROWN
INTO MONTHS
AND ALTHOUGH
THE MEN WERE
CONSTANTLY
ON GUARD,
THERE
WAS NO
TROUBLE
FROM THE
INDIANS
UNTIL
ONE
EVENING...



THE WILD WARWHOOPS, THE
DELUGE OF FLAME-TIPPED
ARROWS... AND THAT WAS ALL!
THE ATTACK CEASED AS SUD-
DENLY AS IT HAD BEGUN...



THERE WEREN'T
ENOUGH OF 'EM
FOR A REAL
ATTACK! COME
ON! LET'S
FIND 'EM!

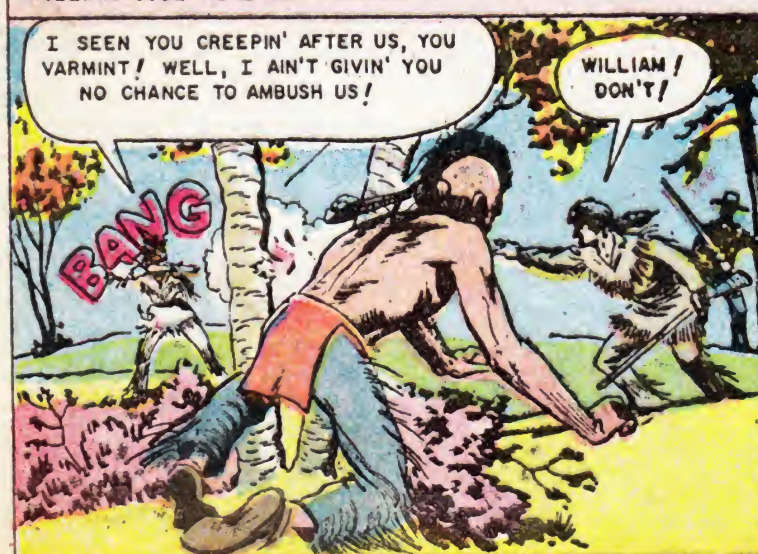
NO... WAIT! THEY COULD'VE
KILLED ALL OF US, BUT THERE
WASN'T ONE OF US EVEN HURT.
THAT WASN'T A REAL ATTACK!
THAT WAS A WARNIN'!



THEY'RE TRYIN' TO SCARE US
INTO LEAVIN'! WELL, WE WON'T
SCARE, BUT WE STILL AIN'T
GOIN' OUT AFTER TROUBLE! NOW
LET'S GET BACK TO WORK...
THERE'S A LOT TO
DO BEFORE WINTER
SETS IN!



BUT TROUBLE WAS NO FARTHER AWAY THAN THE END OF A LONG
RIFLE... THE NEXT MORNING WHILE DAN'L, JOHN STUART AND
WILLIAM COOL WERE OUT HUNTING



WILLIAM!
DON'T!

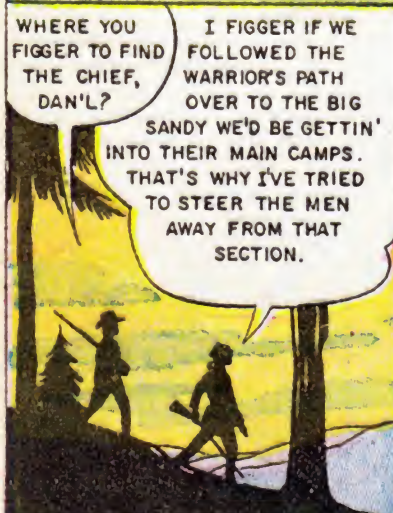
WILLIAM COOL'S SHOT KILLED
THE INDIAN INSTANTLY. DAN'L
HURRIED TO CAMP TO CALL A
PARLAY...

THE INDIAN WAS
SPYIN' BUT HE DIDN'T TRY TO
HARM US! IT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN
TRYING TO PREVENT, BECAUSE NOW
THEY'LL CONSIDER US REAL
ENEMIES... TRY TO WIPE US ALL
OUT OR DEMAND WE TURN OVER
TO THEM THE MAN WHO DID
THE KILLIN'!





WHEN DAN'L AND JOHN STUART SET OUT THAT DAY, BOTH MEN KNEW THE DANGER OF THEIR MISSION...



BUT I HAD A FEELIN' THEY'D BE COMING TO SHOW US THE WAY... DON'T USE YOUR GUN, JOHN. WOULDN'T DO NO GOOD



BUT THE INDIANS MOVED TOO QUICKLY FOR RESISTANCE. SEIZING AND BINDING THE MEN, THEY LED THEM ON A LONG MARCH TO THE INDIAN ENCAMPMENT...



QUICKLY DAN'L WAS TO LEARN THEIR FATE...



BONDS REMOVED, DAN'L CONVERSED WITH THE CHIEF IN THE CHEROKEE LANGUAGE HE HAD LONG AGO LEARNED.

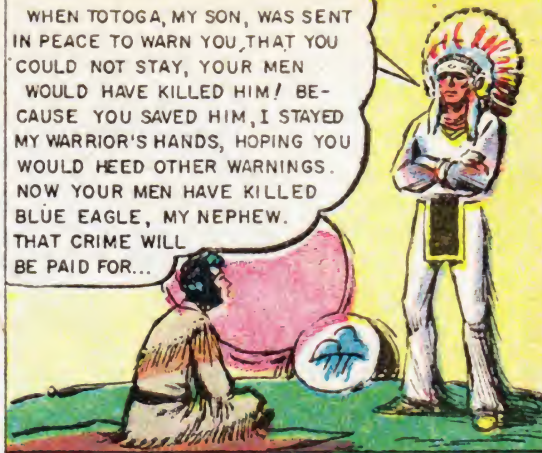
I AM NOLEMIWI. MY PEOPLE KNOW MUCH OF THE GREAT LONG HUNTER, DANIEL BOONE, WHOSE QUALITIES MY PEOPLE HOLD HIGH, WHETHER POSSESSED BY FRIEND OR FOE.



GRAVE ERROR, INDEED, LONG HUNTER! YOU INVADE THE LAND OF MANY PEOPLES. THIS TERRITORY IS SO RICH IN GAME THAT MANY TRIBES SHARE IT, BUT NONE RULES IT!



WHEN TOTOGA, MY SON, WAS SENT IN PEACE TO WARN YOU, THAT YOU COULD NOT STAY, YOUR MEN WOULD HAVE KILLED HIM! BECAUSE YOU SAVED HIM, I STAYED MY WARRIOR'S HANDS, HOPING YOU WOULD HEED OTHER WARNINGS. NOW YOUR MEN HAVE KILLED BLUE EAGLE, MY NEPHEW. THAT CRIME WILL BE PAID FOR...



CALLING HIS SON, THE CHIEF ISSUED HIS ULTIMATUM...

TOMORROW YOU AND YOUR COMPANION WILL BE TAKEN BACK OVER THE MOUNTAINS WHENCE YOU CAME. THERE YOU WILL BE RELEASED!

BUT WHAT ABOUT MY PARTY --- HAVE YOU TAKEN THEM PRISONER, TOO?

THEY HAVE BEEN TAKEN CARE OF!



TATOGA'S ANSWER FILLED DAN'L WITH FOREBODING AND ANGER.

WHILE WE WANT TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH YOU, IN THE END MORE AND MORE OF US WILL COME. EVEN IF YOU KILL US, YOU CAN'T STOP OTHERS FROM COMING!

YOU ARE A BRAVE AND FOOLISH MAN TO SPEAK SO WHILE PRISONER. NOW TAKE HIM AWAY BEFORE I DETERMINE HE IS TOO DANGEROUS TO LIVE!



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING A PARTY OF BRAVES LED THE WHITE CAPTIVES ON A FORCED MARCH TOWARD THE MOUNTAIN GAP...

I'M NOT CROSSIN' BACK OVER THOSE MOUNTAINS UNTIL I FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE REST OF OUR PARTY... AND MAYBE NOT THEN!



ON THE SEVENTH NIGHT OF THE MARCH, DAN'L SUCCEEDED IN WORKING FREE FROM HIS BONDS...

WE GOT TO OUT-INDIAN THE INDIANS IN QUIET, JOHN! I MANAGED TO STEAL THIS KNIFE --- AND IF WE'RE CAREFUL WE CAN GET OUR GUNS WITHOUT ROUSIN' 'EM!



WE COULD KILL ALL OF 'EM EASY, DAN'L. THEN THEY CAN'T FOLLER US!

THEY GAVE US A CHANCE TO GO BACK WHERE WE CAME FROM WITHOUT DOIN' US NO HARM... AN' WE'RE DOIN' NO HARM TO THEM, JOHN! I ONLY HOPE THE OTHERS ARE ALL RIGHT!



THE TWO MEN CAUTIOUSLY FOUND THEIR WAY BACK TO THEIR ORIGINAL CAMP...

THEY'RE GONE, AN' THE CAMP'S BEEN LOOTED AN' BURNED! THE INJUNS MUST'VE STRUCK HERE RIGHT AFTER WE LEFT!

I WAS AFRAID THIS WAS WHAT WE MIGHT FIND! BUT WE'LL KEEP LOOKIN' FOR THEM!



DAN'L AND JOHN STUART SET OUT IN THE HOPE OF FINDING SOME TRACE OF THEIR PARTY... BUT JOHN FINLEY, JAMES MONCEY, JOSEPH HOLDEN AND WILLIAM... ALL EXPERIENCED "LONG HUNTERS" --- WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN. DESPITE THEIR OWN NARROW ESCAPE AND THE TRAGIC FATE THAT HAD PROBABLY OVERTAKEN THE OTHERS, DAN'L AND JOHN STUART DETERMINED TO REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY OF THE "KENTUCKE" FOR THE REST OF THE WINTER.

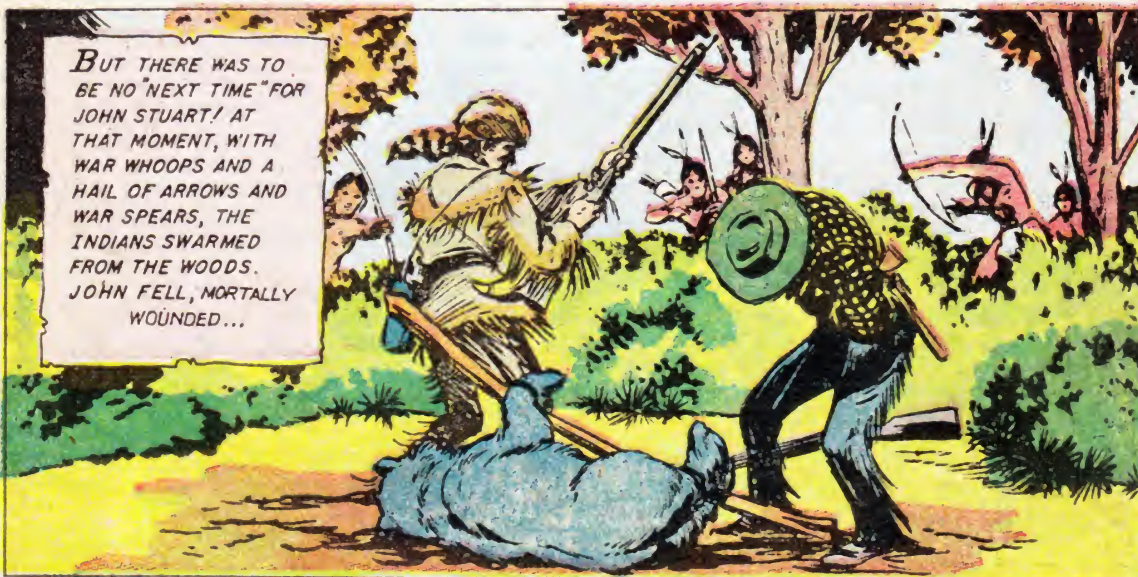
NOW, THEY KNEW, IF THEY MET UP WITH THE INDIANS, THE PENALTY WOULD BE HEAVY...

WE'VE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT THE COUNTRY AND THERE'LL BE WONDERFUL THINGS TO TELL WHEN WE GET BACK!

AYE, DAN'L! THERE COULDN'T BE A BETTER LAND FOR PEOPLE TO SETTLE--- AND NEXT TIME, WE'LL KNOW WHAT'S AHEAD...



BUT THERE WAS TO BE NO "NEXT TIME" FOR JOHN STUART! AT THAT MOMENT, WITH WAR WHOOPS AND A HAIL OF ARROWS AND WAR SPEARS, THE INDIANS SWARMED FROM THE WOODS. JOHN FELL, MORTALLY WOUNDED...



USING THE BEAR'S BODY AS A SHIELD, DAN'L ALTERNATELY FIRED HIS RIFLE AND JOHN'S...



CAN'T HOLD 'EM OFF! THERE'S TOO MANY OF 'EM!

ESCAPING WAS NOT EASY, BUT DAN'L WAS FLEET AND WISE IN THE WAYS OF THE WOODS. AND ONCE HE HIT THE RIVER...



IT WAS A LONG WHILE BEFORE DAN'L DARED TRY FOR LAND. STRUGGLING TO SHORE FROM THE TURBULENT RIVER, WITH CHATTERING TEETH AND FROZEN BODY, HE PULLED HIMSELF UP ON THE ROCKS...

N-NEVER B-BEEN THIS COLD IN MY B-BORNED DAYS...



THE LIFE WAS SLOW COMING TO HIS FROZEN LIMBS...

BEEN RUNNIN' MILES... BUT THAT'S BETTER'N FREEZIN' TO DEATH! GOT TO GET MY BLOOD WARMED UP!



LATER...

MIGHTY LUCKY TO HAVE FOUND ME THIS NICE LI'L CAVE. IF I CAN JUST GET A FIRE STARTED AN GET MY GUN BACK TO WORKIN' AN' MY POWDER AN' BULLETS DRY, I'LL START LOOKIN' FOR SOMETHIN' EATABLE! BUT I'LL SURE HAVE TO BE ON MY GUARD!



EACH DAY THAT SPED BY WAS A GAMBLE AND A CHALLENGE. DAN'L CONTINUED HIS EXPLORATIONS, HUNTED, FISHED, SKINNED HIS ANIMALS AND MADE HIMSELF WARM WINTER MOCCASINS AND CLOTHES. HE NOW HAD AN INTIMATE ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE NEW COUNTRY IN ALL ITS FEATURES, AND NOT ONLY MANAGED TO SURVIVE THE WINTER, BUT TO ELUDE THE MANY HUNTING PARTIES AND TRAPS THE INDIANS SET FOR HIM.



IT WAS TOWARD THE END OF WINTER WHEN DAN'L, HUNTING ALONG THE RIVER, WARILY WATCHED A CANOE APPROACHING...

IT'S CHIEF NOLEMIWI AND HIS SON! AND WITHOUT THEIR BRAVES! THEY MUST BE ON A FRIENDLY VISIT TO ANOTHER TRIBE!



I NEVER EXPECTED AN OPPORTUNITY LIKE THIS, NOLEMIWI! YOUR PEOPLE HAVE KILLED ALL THE REST OF MY PARTY. YOU WOULD HAVE KILLED ME, BUT I ESCAPED. ALL WINTER YOU HAVE CHASED ME AND LAID TRAPS FOR ME. NOW... IT IS WITHIN MY POWER TO KILL BOTH YOU AND YOUR SON!



WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, DANIEL BOONE! YOU HAVE TAKEN US BY SURPRISE AND OUR BLOOD WILL AVENGE THE LIVES OF THE OTHER LONG HUNTERS. IT IS ALWAYS SO... BLOOD FOR BLOOD.

IT SHOULD NOT BE THAT WAY, NOLEMIWI!



SUDDENLY, TO THE INDIANS' SURPRISE, DAN'L THREW DOWN HIS GUN AND LIFTED HIS HAND IN A GESTURE OF FRIENDSHIP.

THE BLOOD THAT HAS BEEN SPILLED BETWEEN YOUR PEOPLE AND MINE HAS NEVER BEEN OF MY CHOOSING. BLOOD FOR BLOOD, LIFE FOR LIFE, SETTLES NOTHING. FROM THE BEGINNING I HAVE WANTED PEACE. NOW I HAVE NO WISH FOR YOUR LIVES.



DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU DO, LEADER OF THE LONG HUNTERS? YOU HAD US IN YOUR POWER... AND NOW YOU PUT YOURSELF IN OUR POWER AGAIN!

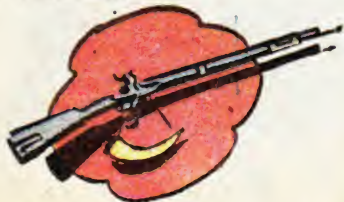


DAN'L HAD TAKEN A BIG CHANCE---AND AWAITED THE RESULT.

YOU HAVE PROVED YOURSELF A BRAVE AND GREAT WARRIOR, LONG HUNTER BOONE... AS WELL AS A MAN OF GREAT WISDOM AND PEACE. TOTOGA AND I WILL TELL OUR PEOPLE OF YOUR DEED. THERE SHALL BE PEACE BETWEEN US.



IT WAS MARCH OF 1771, AFTER ALMOST TWO YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS, WHEN DANIEL BOONE SUDDENLY APPEARED AMONG HIS NEIGHBORS ON THE YADKIN. HIS STORY, TRAVELING THROUGH THE SCATTERED FRONTIER, GAVE A NEW IMPULSE TO THOSE RESTLESS FOR NEW LANDS, NEW HORIZONS. THE FACT THAT OF THOSE WHO HAD GONE TO BLAZE A TRAIL, ONLY DANIEL HAD RETURNED --- THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HARDSHIPS AND PERILS THEY WOULD FACE --- FAILED TO DISCOURAGE THOSE WHO WOULD SOON FOLLOW DAN'L BOONE AND HIS FAMILY BACK ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS.



FOR DAN'L BOONE, THE LONG HUNTER, THE ROAD BACK WOULD LEAD TO ADVENTURES MORE REMARKABLE THAN ANY THAT HAD GONE BEFORE, BUT HE KNEW HE WOULD BE READY FOR THEM.

SOMETIMES THE PRICE SEEMS MIGHTY HIGH... BUT IT'S A GOOD LAND, AN' WORTH IT! AN' THERE'S STILL A LOT OF LONG HUNTIN' TO BE DONE BEFORE WE'RE THROUGH!



THE END

BUFFALO BILL'S

HISTORY-MAKING RIDE

FAR SWIFTER THAN THE BEST AND FASTEST STAGE LINES OF THE TIME WERE THE RIDERS OF THE PONY EXPRESS WHO CARRIED A FAST MAIL SERVICE FROM ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI, TO SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, IN THE YEAR 1860. THE MAINTENANCE OF THEIR SCHEDULE IN ALL KINDS OF WEATHER AND IN THE FACE OF INDIAN DANGERS AND OTHER HAZARDS, WON THE SERVICE A FAME WHICH TIME HAS NOT DIMINISHED. THE EXPRESS DEMANDED RIDERS WHO WERE HARDY, COURAGEOUS AND SCHOoled IN THE LIFE OF THE PLAINS... AND FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD BILL CODY FULFILLED ALL THESE REQUIREMENTS.

THEY'LL HAVE TO COME OUT OF THOSE CHALK HILLS QUICKER THAN THAT IF THEY EXPECT TO GET NEAR ME! I'LL BE ACROSS THE RIVER AND AT RED BUTTES BEFORE THEY EVEN GET TO THE RIVER BANK!



SO LONG, MEN! GLAD YOU'RE DECIDING YOU CAN'T CATCH UP THIS TIME --- AND HOPE YOU DON'T GET ANY SMARTER OR FASTER... AND THAT I CAN KEEP ON BEING LUCKY!



THE PONY EXPRESS RIDERS TRAVELLED A DISTANCE OF MORE THAN 1900 MILES OVER PLAINS, MOUNTAINS AND HAZARDOUS RIVER CROSSINGS, ON HORSES BRED FOR SPEED. RIDING IN RELAYS, EACH RIDER RODE THREE HORSES IN SUCCESSION, PICKING UP HIS NEW MOUNTS AT STATIONS THAT WERE FROM TEN TO FIFTEEN MILES APART, AND COVERING AS MANY AS SEVENTY MILES BEFORE HE PASSED THE MAIL POUCH ON TO HIS SUCCESSOR. ONE OF THE MOST HARROWING ROUTES WAS ALONG THE WYOMING SECTION.

BUT AS BILL CONTINUED HIS RIDE TO THE RED BUTTES STATION, ON THE PLATTE, HE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO A DIFFERENT KIND OF TROUBLE...

ALMOST THERE NOW... AND RIGHT ON TIME! THE SUN'S JUST SETTING AND SETH WILL BE WAITING!



A FEW MINUTES LATER BILL GALLOPED INTO RED BUTTES...

HIYAH, BILL! YOU'RE RIGHT ON TIME, AS USUAL! GUESS NOTHIN' HAPPENED!



NOTHIN' MUCH! FEW INDIANS CHASED ME FOR A SPELL, BACK YONDER... BUT THEM CAYUSES THEY RIDE JUST SNEEZED ON MY DUST, AN' THEY HIGH-TAILED IT BACK TO CAMP! HERE'S THE POUCH.

GOOD RIDIN', BOY! WALL... SEE YOU DAY AFTER TOMORRY AT THREE CROSSINGS!



AS SETH GALLOPED OFF BILL NOTICED THE THREE STRANGERS...

WHAT WE'RE LOOKIN' FOR MAY BE IN THAT POUCH ...OR THE ONE COMING TOMORROW! IT'S UP TO YOU TO FIND OUT IF IT'S IN THE ONE THAT JUST WENT OUT, SMOKY! LAUREL AN' ME WILL WORK ON THIS HOMBRE WAITIN' FOR THE NEXT POUCH.

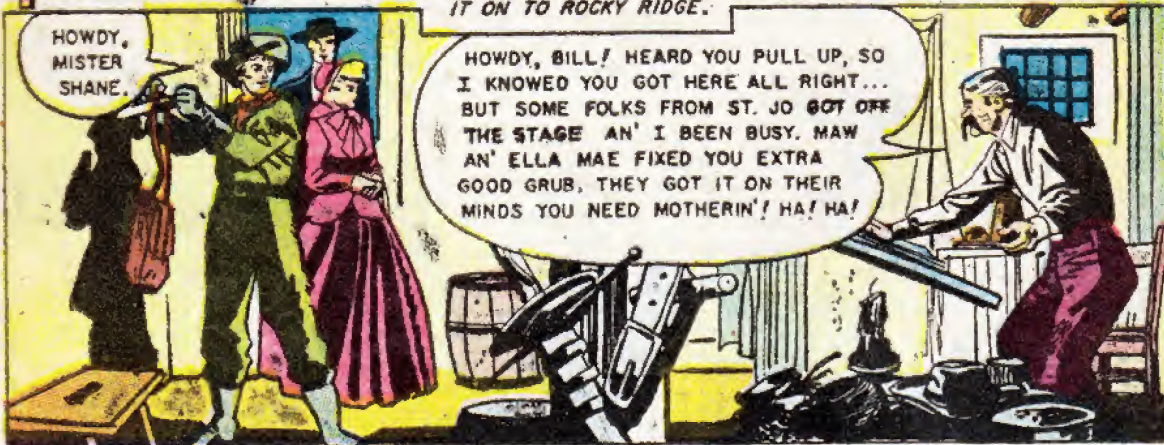


THE BOYS ARE WAITIN' THIS SIDE OF THREE CROSSINGS FOR THE FELLA THAT JEST RODE OFF. THEY'LL HOLD HIM FOR ME!





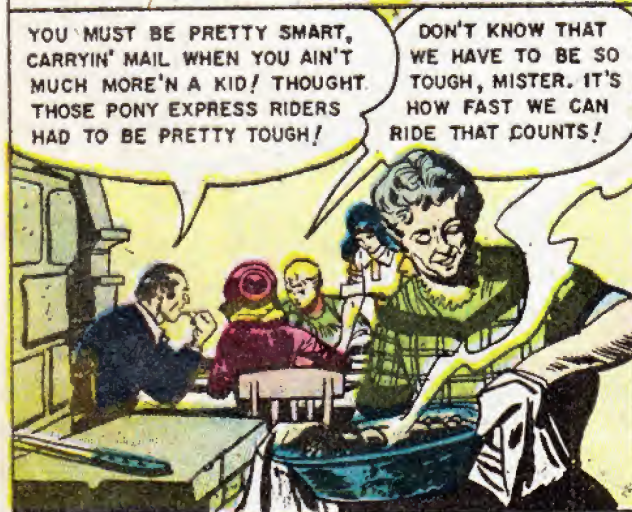
RED BUTTES WAS A STAGE COACH STOP AS WELL AS A PONY EXPRESS RELAY STATION, AND BILL WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO A GOOD MEAL, A BED, AND SOME RECREATION BEFORE HE PICKED UP THE MAIL FROM THE RIDER DUE THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, WHEN BILL WOULD START OUT FOR THE THREE CROSSINGS STATION. THERE SETH, HAVING HAD A REST PERIOD, WOULD TAKE THE MAIL FROM BILL AND CARRY IT ON TO ROCKY RIDGE.



HOWDY, MISTER SHANE.

HOWDY, BILL! HEARD YOU PULL UP, SO I KNEWED YOU GOT HERE ALL RIGHT... BUT SOME FOLKS FROM ST. JO GOT OFF THE STAGE AN' I BEEN BUSY. MAW AN' ELLA MAE FIXED YOU EXTRA GOOD GRUB, THEY GOT IT ON THEIR MINDS YOU NEED MOTHERIN'! HA! HA!

THE PASSENGERS FROM THE STAGE MANAGED TO EAT AT THE SAME TIME BILL DID . . .



YOU MUST BE PRETTY SMART, CARRYIN' MAIL WHEN YOU AIN'T MUCH MORE'N A KID! THOUGHT THOSE PONY EXPRESS RIDERS HAD TO BE PRETTY TOUGH!

DON'T KNOW THAT WE HAVE TO BE SO TOUGH, MISTER. IT'S HOW FAST WE CAN RIDE THAT COUNTS!

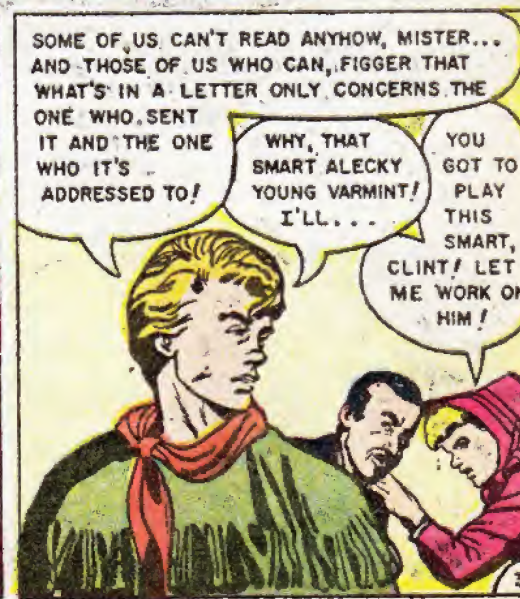


I RECKON YOU CARRY MIGHTY IMPORTANT MAIL IN THAT POUCH OF YOURS! A FRIEND OF MINE IN ST. JO WAS PLANNING TO SEND A REAL VALUABLE ENVELOPE THROUGH, AROUND ABOUT THIS TIME.



WE HAD A LITTLE BET ON ABOUT WHETHER IT WOULD GET THROUGH OR NOT. DON'T SUPPOSE YOU REMEMBER WHETHER YOU HAD A LETTER IN THAT POUCH FROM THOMAS ROGERS IN ST. JO GOING TO THE LUCKY LAND MINE COMPANY?

WE'RE HIRED TO CARRY THE MAIL . . . NOT READ IT!



SOME OF US CAN'T READ ANYHOW, MISTER... AND THOSE OF US WHO CAN, FIGGER THAT WHAT'S IN A LETTER ONLY CONCERNS THE ONE WHO SENT IT AND THE ONE WHO IT'S ADDRESSED TO!

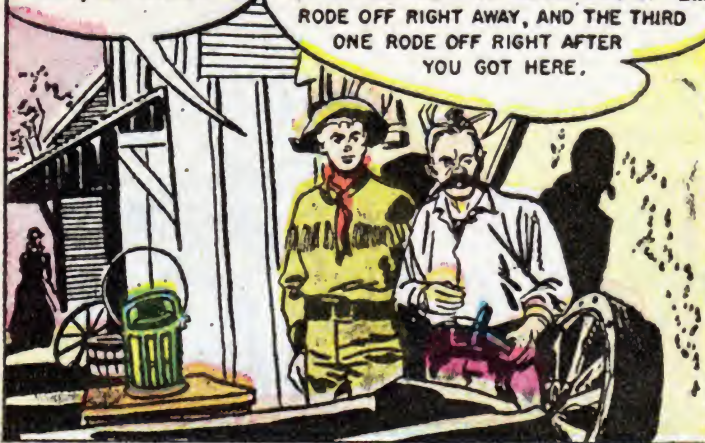
WHY, THAT SMART ALECKY YOUNG VARMIN'T! I'LL...

YOU GOT TO PLAY THIS SMART, CLINT! LET ME WORK ON HIM!

BILL QUESTIONED SHANE, WHO WAS IN CHARGE OF THE STATION...

WHY'D THOSE PEOPLE
GET OFF THE STAGE
HERE, MR. SHANE?

I WONDERED THAT, MYSELF, BILL.
THREE PRETTY TOUGH-LOOKING FELLERS
ON HORSES MET 'EM HERE. TWO OF 'EM
RODE OFF RIGHT AWAY, AND THE THIRD
ONE RODE OFF RIGHT AFTER
YOU GOT HERE.



MAN'S NAME IS CLINT BOWLING AN' HE
CALLS THE GIRL LAUREL. SHE'S A
MIGHTY HIGH-STEPPIN' LOOKIN' FILLY...
AN' IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S TAKEN A
SHINE TO YOU, BILL. BETTER WATCH
OUT, SON... YOU AIN'T RIGHTLY OLD
ENOUGH FOR THAT KIND.



DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME,
MR. SHANE. I'VE SEEN A LOT
LIKE HER BACK IN ST. JOSEPH.
THEY WORK IN THE GAMBLIN'
PLACES AND TAVERNS EVEN IF
I WAS OLDER, THEY AIN'T MY
TYPE. BUT I'D SURE LIKE TO
KNOW WHAT SHE AND BOWLING
ARE UP TO!

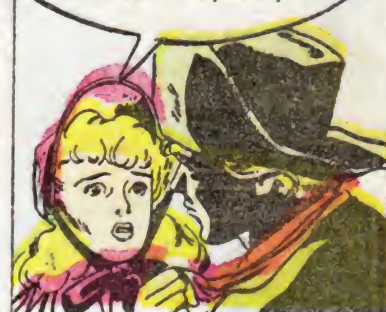


**BILL WAS TO LEARN THE
ANSWER TO HIS AROUSED
SUSPICIONS VERY QUICKLY...**

OH, PLEASE WAIT! I'VE BEEN
WANTING TO TALK TO YOU...



FROM THE MOMENT I SAW YOU,
YOU DIDN'T SEEM AT ALL LIKE
A KID TO ME. I THOUGHT YOU
WERE WONDERFUL. IT TAKES A
REAL MAN TO BE A PONY EX-
PRESS RIDER. BUT I DIDN'T
REALIZE YOU WERE BILL CODY!
WHY, EVEN IN ST. JO. PEOPLE
ARE BEGINNING TO TALK
ABOUT YOU, BILL!



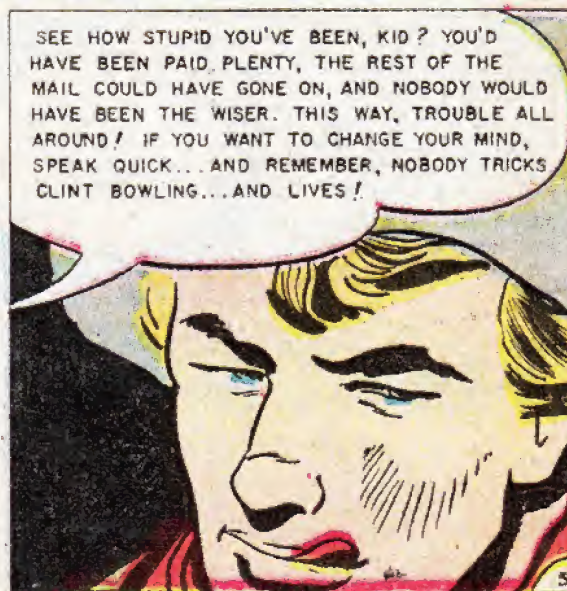
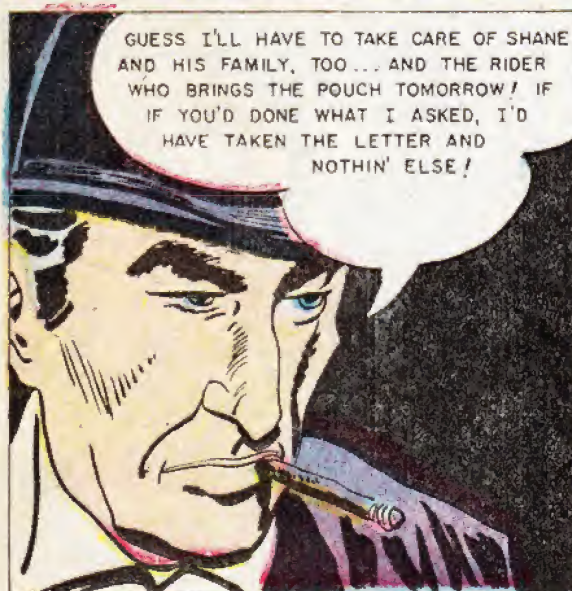
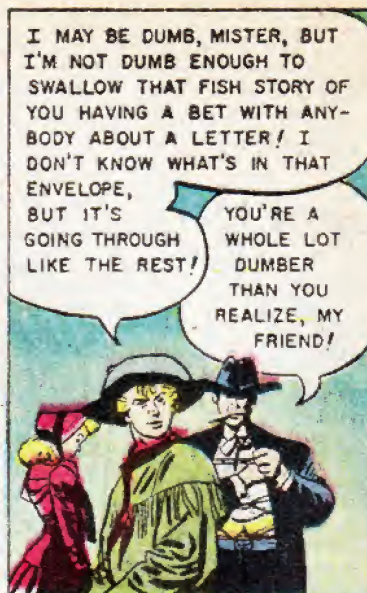
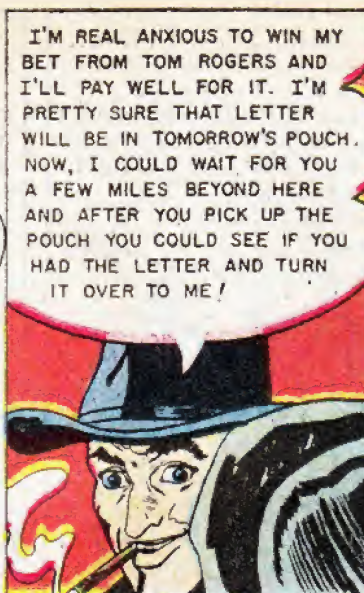
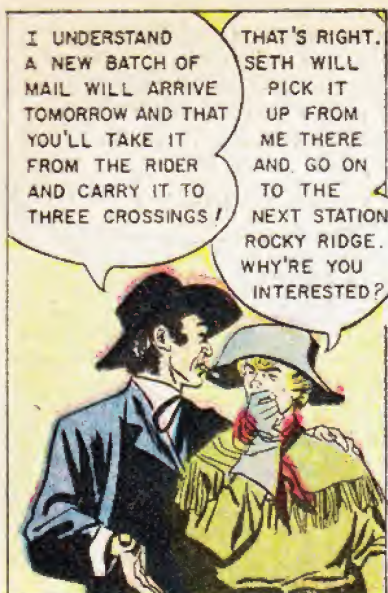
CLINT BOWLING, MY ---ER--- GUARDIAN...
COULD USE A BRIGHT BOY LIKE YOU,
BILL... AND THINK OF THE
FUN WE COULD HAVE
TOGETHER! RIGHT NOW
HE'LL PAY YOU WELL
FOR JUST A LITTLE
FAVOR YOU COULD DO
FOR HIM. WILL YOU TALK
TO HIM ABOUT IT, BILL?

I'D BE GLAD TO
FIND OUT WHAT
MR. BOWLING
WANTS, MA'AM!



I KNEW YOU WERE
SMART, BILL. COME
ON! CLINT IS WAITING
FOR YOU OVER HERE.





BILL, KNOWING THAT AT ANY MOMENT HE MIGHT FEEL A BULLET IN HIS BACK, WAS THINKING QUICK...



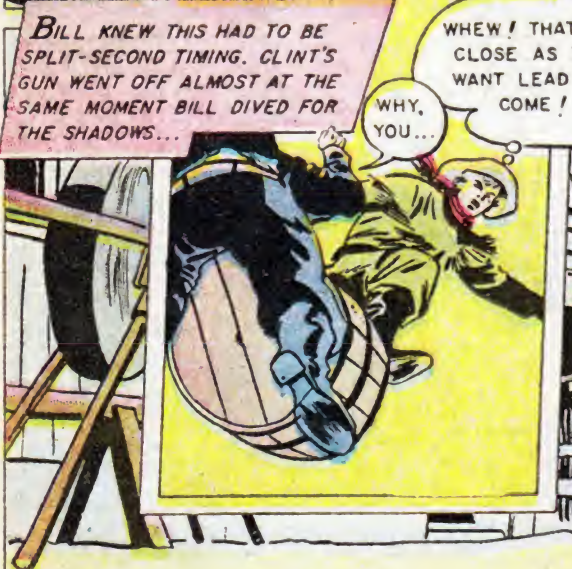
THAT LETTER MUST BE MIGHTY IMPORTANT TO YOU, MR. BOWLING!

YOU BET! IT'S A DEED TO SOME OF THE RICHEST GOLD COUNTRY IN CALIFORNIA AND NEVADA! WELL, KID, YOU GOING TO BE SMART?

I'M GOING TO BE SMART, ALL RIGHT, MISTER BOWLING! THAT DEED COULDN'T BE RIGHTFULLY YOURS OR YOU WOULDN'T BE HAVING TO GET IT THIS WAY, SO...



BILL KNEW THIS HAD TO BE SPLIT-SECOND TIMING. CLINT'S GUN WENT OFF ALMOST AT THE SAME MOMENT BILL DIVED FOR THE SHADOWS...



WHEW! THAT'S AS CLOSE AS I EVER WANT LEAD TO COME!

WHY, YOU...

YOU CRAZY TRAIL-HERDER! YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH THIS?



I'M SURE ENOUGH GOING TO TRY!

I DON'T LIKE THIS KIND OF THING, BUT YOU STARTED IT!



YOU'RE NOT MUCH OF A FIGHTER WITHOUT A GUN, ARE YOU? YOUR KIND USUALLY ISN'T.





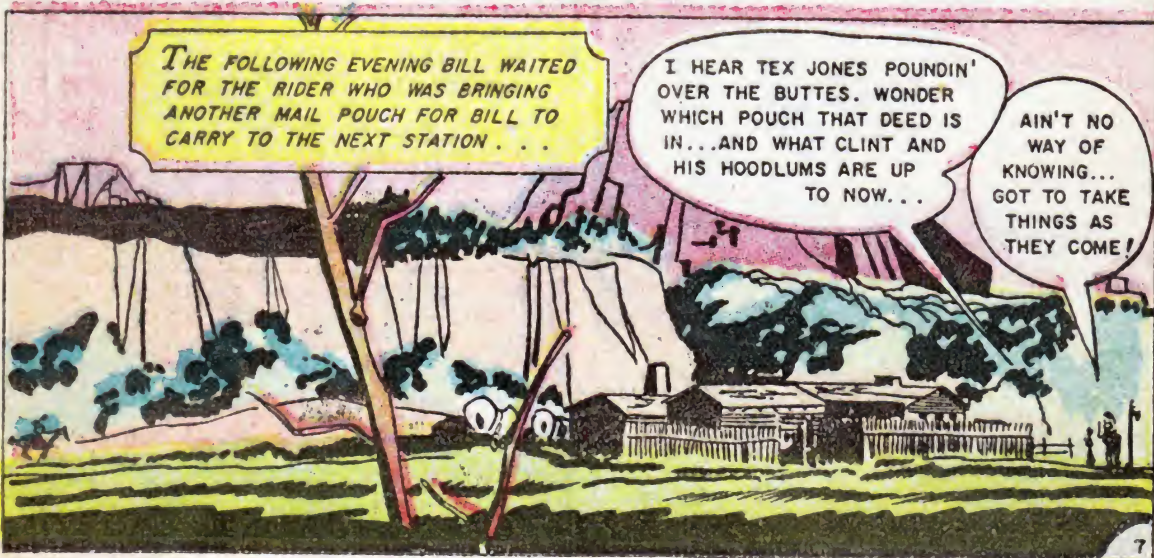
THE SOUND OF GUNFIRE HAD BROUGHT BILL REINFORCEMENTS...

OH, NO, YOU DON'T! I DIDN'T TRUST YOU FROM THE TIME YOU GOT OFF THAT STAGE ALL DRESSED IN THEM GEE-GAWS AN' THEN MAKING EYES AT A BOY JUST TO GET YOUR WAY!

DROP THAT GUN! I-- I'LL SHOOT!



FURIOUS BECAUSE CLINT BOWLING HAD ESCAPED AND LEFT HER PRISONER, LAUREL BROKE DOWN AND CONFESSED THAT CLINT WAS A CROOKED GAMBLER FROM ST. JO. HE HAD CHEATED TOM ROGERS AT GAMBLING, AND THE NIGHT ROGERS, AFTER THREATS, WAS TO TURN THE DEED OVER TO CLINT, IN PAYMENT, TOM HAD BEEN KILLED IN A FIGHT IN CLINT'S PLACE. IT WAS THEN CLINT FOUND ROGERS HAD GIVEN THE DEED TO A FRIEND TO SEND BY PONY EXPRESS BACK TO HIS BROTHER IN CALIFORNIA, WHO WAS OPERATING THE MINES.



A FEW MINUTES LATER . . .

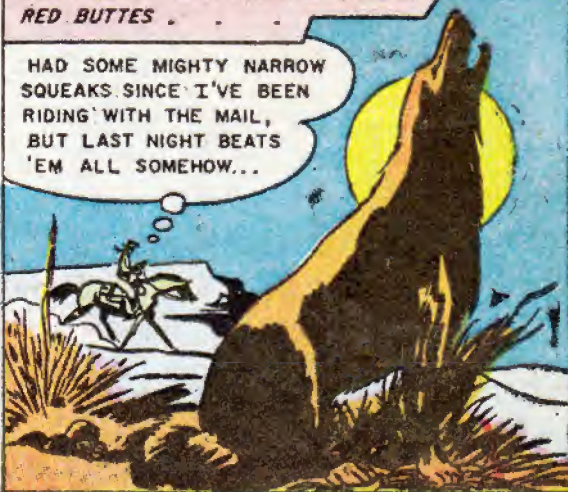
INJUNS SURE GETTIN' CANTANKEROUS! HAD A COUPLE ARROWS SHOT AT ME THIS TRIP!

WE HAD A LITTLE EXCITEMENT OF OUR OWN ROUND HERE LAST NIGHT! GET MR. SHANE TO TELL YOU ABOUT IT, TEX! SO LONG FOR NOW.



GALLOPING TOWARD THREE CROSSINGS, SEVENTY-SIX MILES AWAY, BILL HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO THINK ABOUT WHAT HAD HAPPENED AT RED BUTTES . . .

HAD SOME MIGHTY NARROW SQUEAKS SINCE I'VE BEEN RIDING WITH THE MAIL, BUT LAST NIGHT BEATS 'EM ALL SOMEHOW...



I'D SURE FEEL BETTER IF CLINT BOWLING HADN'T GOTTEN AWAY LAST NIGHT! LAUREL WAS A BAD ONE, BUT CLINT'S THE BRAINS. THAT KIND OF HOMBRE'S LIKE A RATTLER... ALWAYS COILED TO STRIKE!

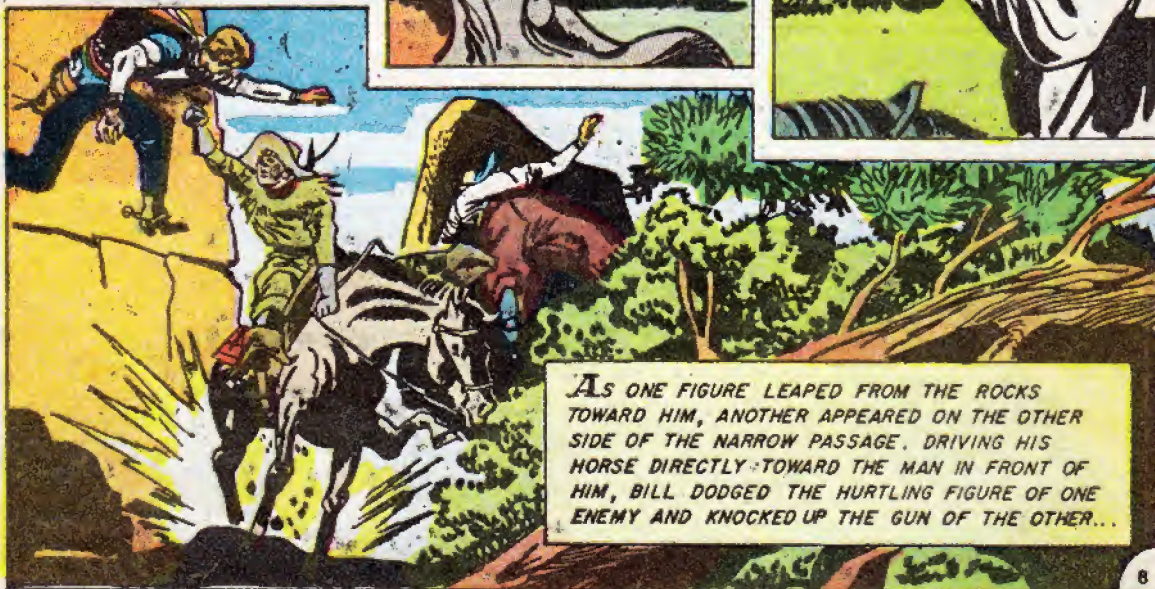


SPEAKIN' OF RATTLERS, WONDER IF THIS IS ONE OF MISTER BOWLING'S FRIENDS WAITIN' TO WELCOME ME!



THE MAN ON HORSEBACK BLOCKING HIS PATH SHOUTED AT HIM TO STOP, BUT INSTEAD BILL SENT HIS HORSE AT A FULL GALLOP AHEAD . . .

HEY, YOU! PULL UP AN' HAND OVER YOUR MAIL POUCH! PULL UP...OR I'LL SHOOT!



As one figure leaped from the rocks toward him, another appeared on the other side of the narrow passage, driving his horse directly toward the man in front of him, Bill dodged the hurtling figure of one enemy and knocked up the gun of the other...

PUSHING THE GUNMAN AND HIS HORSE BACK AGAINST THE ROCKS, BILL GRABBED HIS GUN. . .

I LEARNED THIS TRICK FROM A PAWNEE! FIGHT IN CLOSE AND YOU WON'T GET SHOT!



OWWW!

AND HERE'S ANOTHER TRICK I LEARNED FROM THE PAWNEES!

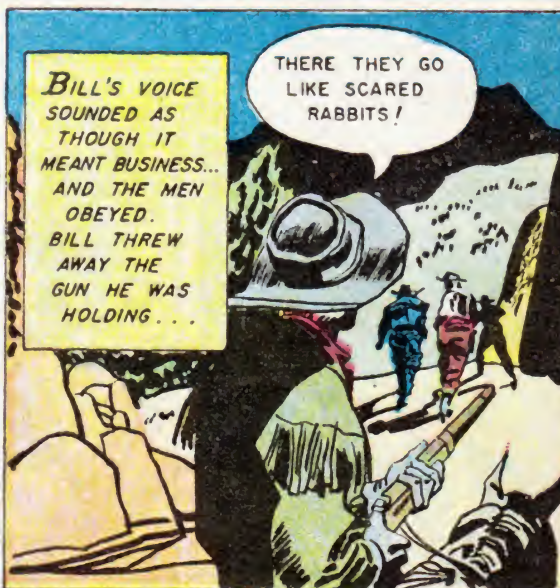
GUIDING HIS HORSE WITH HIS KNEES, BILL WHIRLED TO FACE THE TWO MEN BEHIND HIM WHO SEEMED STUNNED BY HIS QUICK MANEUVERS...

IF YOU'RE BOWLING'S MEN, YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK! BOWLING'S RUN FOR IT AND THE LAW WILL SOON BE AFTER ALL OF YOU! SO UNLESS YOU WANT TO GET SHOT FIRST, DROP YOUR GUNS AND LEAVE YOUR HORSES AND START WALKING... RIGHT BACK THROUGH THE PASS!



BILL'S VOICE SOUNDED AS THOUGH IT MEANT BUSINESS... AND THE MEN OBEYED. BILL THREW AWAY THE GUN HE WAS HOLDING...

THERE THEY GO LIKE SCARED RABBITS!



BILL PUSHED HIS HORSE EVEN HARDER TO MAKE UP FOR THE TIME HE LOST. BY DAWN HE REACHED THREE CROSSINGS. . . WITHOUT ANY PREMONITION OF WHAT STILL LAY AHEAD. . .

HOPE SETH WILL BE WAITING. I SURE COULD USE SOME SLEEP!



AT THREE CROSSINGS THE STATION AGENT HAD
BAD NEWS

BILL, SETH WAS KILLED LAST NIGHT.
THREE FELLOWS SHOT HIM BY THE
PASS, BUT HE CLUNG TO HIS HORSE
UNTIL HE GOT HERE AN'
THEN DIED RIGHT
AFTER HE TOLD US
WHAT HAPPENED!

THREE
PONY

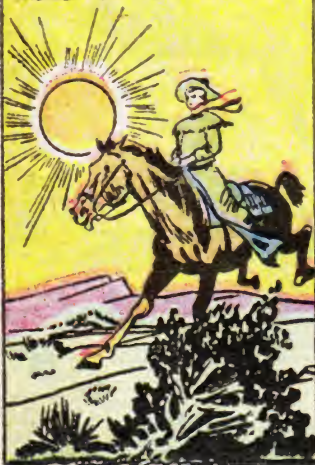
POOR
SETH!

THIS
MEANS
THERE'S
NOBODY TO
CARRY THE
MAIL ON TO
ROCKY RIDGE!

GIVE ME A FRESH
HORSE, MR. MC CRAE.
I'LL TAKE THAT
EXTRA EIGHTY-FIVE
MILE STRETCH MY-
SELF. COULDN'T
SLEEP ANYHOW,
THINKING ABOUT
SETH AND THOSE

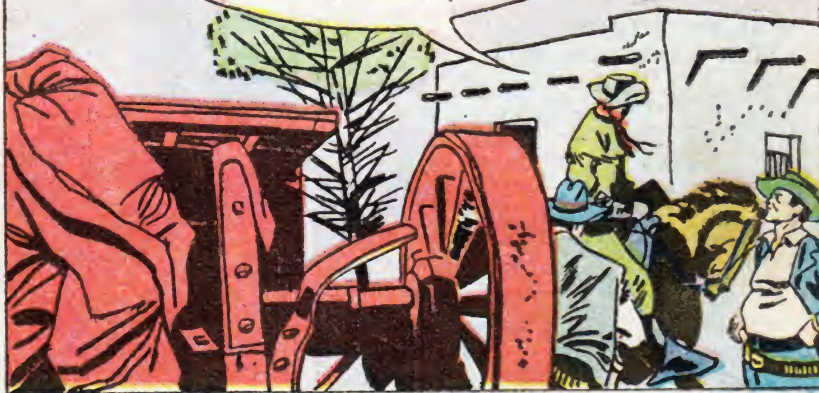
ORNERY
CRITTERS!
BUT THEY
DIDN'T GET
THE POUCH
ANYWAY!

WITHOUT TAKING TIME OUT
TO REST, BILL STARTED
RIGHT OUT FOR ROCKY
RIDGE



AT
ROCKY
RIDGE...

IF YOU'LL GIVE ME THE EASTBOUND
MAIL POUCH, I'LL TAKE THAT RIDE FOR
YOU, SMITTY. I'M PLANNIN' TO GO RIGHT
BACK TO RED BUTTES ANYHOW. I GOT
A LOT OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS
BACK THERE!



I WANT TO SEE IF I CAN PICK UP THE TRACKS
OF THEM VARMINTS THAT SHOT SETH... AN' IF
THEY HAVEN'T CAUGHT BOWLING YET, I'M GOIN'
TO HELP LOOK FOR HIM. AND BESIDES, I
PROMISED ELLA MAE I'D TAKE HER TO A DANCE
TOMORROW NIGHT, SO IT DON'T LEAVE ME
A LOT OF TIME.



BILL CLIMBED ONTO A FRESH HORSE . . .

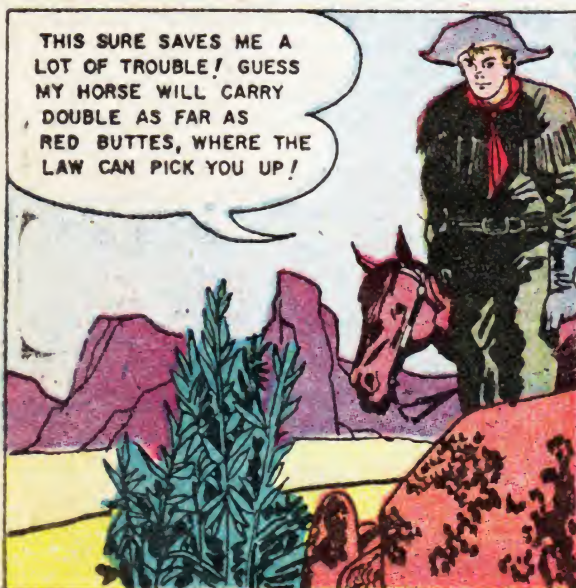
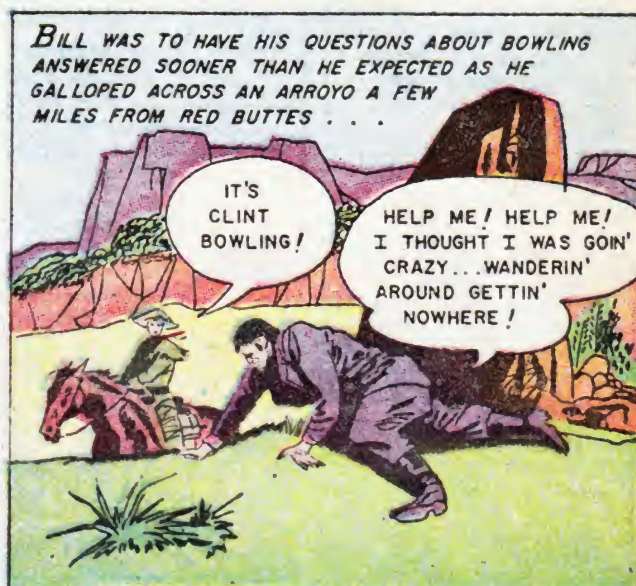
YOU MEAN AFTER RIDIN'
161 MILES WITHOUT RESTIN'
YOU'RE INTENDIN' RIDIN' RIGHT
BACK THE SAME ROUTE?
BOY, YOU'RE PLAIN LOCO!

I TOLD YOU...
I GOT TO SEE
THIS BOWLING
THING CLEANED
UP ONCE AND
FOR ALL!



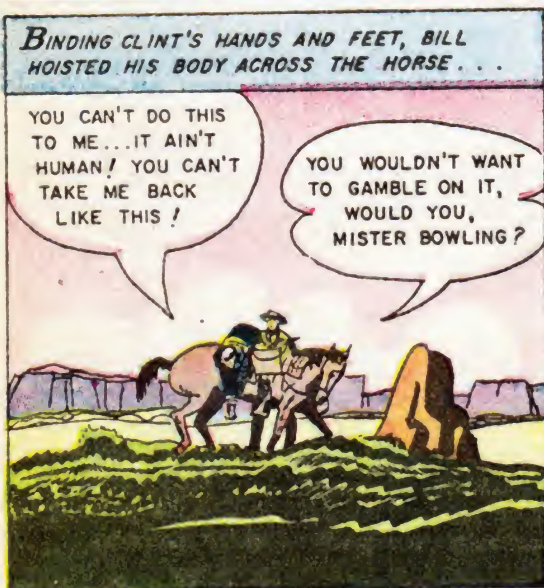
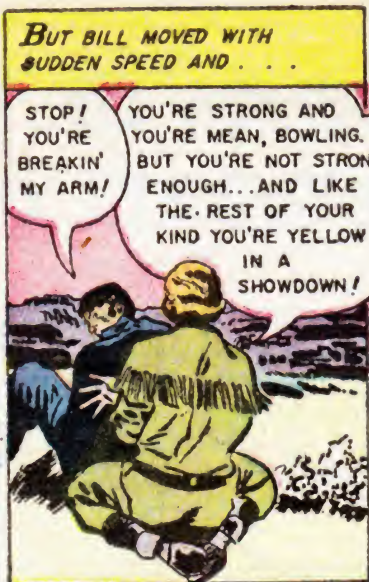
CHANGING HORSES
AS HE CAME
TO THE
DIFFERENT
RELAY STATIONS,
BILL RODE BACK
OVER THE BARREN
RIDGES AND
SUN-BAKED
PLAINS BETWEEN
ROCKY RIDGE
AND
THREE CROSSINGS...
AND AGAIN
WITHOUT
STOPPING,
BACK
TOWARD
RED BUTTES.

IT WAS BETWEEN THREE CROSSINGS AND RED BUTTES THAT BILL SUDDENLY
PULLED HIS HORSE UP AT THE SIGHT OF SOMETHING IN HIS PATH



AS BILL APPROACHED CLINT, THE GAMBLER MADE
A DIVE FOR HIM, KNOCKING HIM OFF HIS FEET...
AND BILL SAW THE GLINT OF STEEL IN CLINT'S HAND.





BILL CODY'S 322-MILE RIDE STILL REMAINS THE LONGEST ON THE RECORDS OF THE PONY EXPRESS... AND IT WAS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT WHEN HE GALLOPED BACK INTO RED BUTTES THAT DAY, IN SPITE OF HIS STOP TO PICK UP THE "EXPRESS PACKAGE FOR THE LAW", HE WAS EXACTLY ON TIME WITH THE EASTBOUND MAIL! THUS, EVEN AS A YOUTH, THE MAN WHO WOULD ONE DAY BECOME THE WORLD FAMOUS "BUFFALO BILL", NOTED FOR HIS OTHER, EVEN MORE EXCITING ADVENTURES, BEGAN TO SHOW THE HEROIC MOLD OF HIS CHARACTER!

THE END

LEGENDS OF THE DAVY CROCKETT COUNTRY

In the mountains of East Tennessee they will tell you tales of Davy Crockett never heard before. Why, Davy wasn't really killed in the Battle of the Alamo. Davy is still huntin' through the mountains. Sometimes he stops a bit to sit on a log beside another woodsman and swap tall tales about huntin'."

It might scare some people to have Davy appear along a forest trail or down a mountain path, but not the staunch mountain men of Davy's own country. They believe such things can happen . . . and Davy's a friendly soul! No good hunter need ever be afraid of Davy Crockett.

Old Kate, the Bell Witch of Robertson County, however, strikes fear into those who encounter her. Tales about Old Kate that they tell around those parts are mighty eerie.

It was during the early part of the nineteenth century, when John Bell came to Tennessee from North Carolina, bought a tract of land and settled with his large family and numerous slaves. To round out his holdings, Bell bought a section of land from Mrs. Kate Batts, a neighbor who had a reputation for meanness. Bell was noted for an almost grim piety and uprightness, yet no sooner had the land transfer been completed than Mrs. Batts began declaring that Bell had cheated her. This fancied injustice vexed the old woman for years. On her deathbed she swore that she would come back and "haunt John Bell and all his kith and kin to their graves."

Sure enough, tradition says, the Bells were tormented for years by the malicious spirit of Old Kate Batts. John Bell and his favorite daughter, Betsy, were the principal targets. Toward the other members of the family the watch was either indifferent or, as in the case of Mrs. Bell, friendly.

No one ever saw her, but every visitor to the Bell home claimed they heard her. The spirit of Old Kate led John and Betsy Bell, it was said, a merry chase. She threw furniture and dishes at them, they claimed. She pulled their noses, yanked their hair, poked needles into them. She yelled all night to keep them from sleeping and snatched food from their mouths at mealtime.

When Betsy fell in love with Josiah Gardener, a young man who lived on the adjoining farm, old

Katie included Josiah in her vigorous displeasure. reached Nashville, Andrew Jackson and some Gardener finally gave up and fled from the state.

When Old Kate's fame as a "hant" at length friends determined to face the terror and dispel the story once and for all. In high spirits they set out for the Bell farm. Suddenly, on the boundary of Bell's property, it is related, the wagon in which Jackson and his friends were riding, would move no farther. The mules strained and Jackson yelled at them. Out of the empty air came Kate's voice, "All right, General, I've had my fun — the wagon can move on." And it did.

That night, so the story went, Kate kept the house in an uproar. She sang, she threw dishes, she overturned furniture. She had as little respect for a future president of the United States as she did for anyone else. Next morning the harried Jackson made an early start, crying out to Bell as he left, "I'd rather fight the British all over again than have any more dealings with that torment."

* Old Kate disappeared when John Bell died. At intervals the newspapers revive the story with an account of how some descendant of Bell's is due for a visitation, which they say is the lot of one person in each generation. But Old Kate is apparently frustrated by present day publicity methods!

Near the headwaters of the Kentucky River in Kentucky, around Boone Creeks and Boone Hill, they say Dan'l Boone, who with several companions used to hunt in this country, often comes back — like Davy Crockett — just to see how things are going, and to maybe lead a lost hunter back to the right trail.

The old customs and folk superstitions have survived with great tenacity in these mountain fastnesses. Many peculiarities of speech, song, custom and belief, are a heritage from English and Scottish-Irish ancestors.

Here, a couple contemplating marriage, is "called out in meetin'" at least once prior to the marriage ceremony. So steadfast is the belief that a bride must start her new life in a new pair of shoes that if the family is unable to buy a pair, it becomes a matter of neighborhood concern, and the ceremony must wait until the bride can be newly shod.

Slat sunbonnets, of calico or any bright-colored material, are the usual headgear of the hill women, just as was the custom back in the time of Dan'l and Davy. After marriage, however, no matter how young the bride may be, she is expected to don "decent duds," discarding bows, beads and "ear-bobs"! Dark colors are substituted for the vivid pinks, blues, reds, and lilacs proper for unmarried girls.

A strong sense of the necessity of warding off evil pervades mountain superstition. The devil is a personage, as real as he is malicious — but easily foiled if you really mean right and have the right formula. Satan may be sent packing by the sacred words, "In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost," or the sign of the Cross — just as the ancestors of the people now living in the Hill Country, used to believe back in Europe centuries ago.

Stories of people seeing the devil are accepted, and such an experience might almost be described as normal. Hard by the headwaters of Hell-fer-Sartain, for instance, is the Devil's Jump, a small branch, its course cluttered throughout by a confused mass of boulders and rocks. Here the devil, skipping in haste from hilltop to hilltop, his apron loaded with rocks with which he proposed to burden the land, "busted" his apron string and dropped the cargo into the stream below. To the present day, an unusual scattering of rocks will be met with the exclamation, "The Devil must've broken his apron string hereabouts."

Leslie County has the usual legend, based on a common Old World theme, of a wager for the soul of a human being. The devil challenged a gunsmith to a shooting match with the soul of the craftsman as prize. Singularly enough, the gunsmith won. He had the scare of his life, however, and never after could he be persuaded to return to his bench and fashion fine guns.

Among these people, who are not of the twentieth century, nor want to be, strange things are everyday happenings, so it is not unusual for witchcraft and "hants" to be taken as a matter-of-course. They can understand Davy Crockett and Dan'l Boone being lonesome for the woods and the life they once knew, and they are always welcome to return. Witches, however, are quite another story; they no longer belong. But they are feared just the same.

If horses and mules are restless at night, if they prance and snort, everyone is sure that evil spirits

are trying to mount them. Many persons braid corn husks into the manes to ward off this evil. A horse can see ghosts and so may the rider if he looks straight forward between the horse's ears. If you don't hang a bread-sifter on the doorknob at night, you'll find witches in the bread in the morning. Along the Mississippi River, early morning mists are sometimes believed to be the ghosts of persons drowned in the stream. In the same section a giant headless dog appears, and ghosts of Revolutionary War soldiers battle nightly for gold that once was hidden in an old tree. Even these, though, are less dreadful than the wraith of the desperado who, on dismal nights, formerly promenaded the road between the tree where he had been hanged and his unquiet grave.

The hanging tree has long since died, because any tree on which a man has been hanged will wither and die, just as any tree which has been struck by a hoop snake. The hoop snake, locally held to be the most poisonous of all reptiles, will take its tail in its mouth, and roll toward its victim faster than the swiftest horse can run. It can even roll uphill, and fortunate indeed is he who can escape it. But if any snake is killed, there is always a chance for the victim to recover from its bite if part of the snake's carcass is bound over the wound. If a child steps on a rusty nail, he must grease the nail and lay it away to prevent infection.

Weather signs are deferred to and planting determined by the phases of the moon. Pleasant weather is assured if clouds move rapidly or rabbits are seen in unprotected places. Pigs running about with sticks in their mouths and creating an unusual disturbance, foretell a storm. In times of drought, a snake killed and turned belly-up on the top of a fencepost will bring rain. And, of course, any vegetable whose fruit grows above the ground must be planted in the light of the moon, while any whose fruit grows underground, such as potatoes, must be planted in the dark of the moon.

"If it comes, it no comes; if it no comes, it comes," means that if the crow comes, the corn will not grow — if the crow doesn't come, the corn will grow!

They knew all these things in the hill country, 'way back when Dan'l Boone was blazing his trails, and later when Davy Crockett was a walkin' flesh-and-blood shootin' hero — and they believe them just as firmly now. The legends of the Davy Crockett country stay strong.

DAVY CROCKETT

and the RENEGADE PLUNDERERS



IT WAS A DAY IN 1803. DAVY CROCKETT HAD BEEN AWAY FROM HOME FOR THREE YEARS AND WAS ON HIS WAY BACK TO TENNESSEE WHERE HIS FAMILY LIVED. FOLLOWING AN ANCIENT TRAIL, KNOWN AS THE CHICAMAUNGA PATH, THAT RAN ALONG A CREEK BY THE SAME NAME AND CUT THROUGH A NARROW MOUNTAIN PASS, DAVY'S DANGEROUS ADVENTURE WITH A RENEGADE WHITE AND A RENEGADE INDIAN... JASPER MARKEL AND DRAGGING CANOE... FIRST BEGAN

DAVY WAS ONLY SEVENTEEN THAT DAY HIS PATH CROSSED THAT OF JASPER MARKEL AND DRAGGING CANOE, BUT HE HAD OBTAINED HIS EDUCATION IN THE ROUGH SCHOOL OF THE TENNESSEE BACKWOODS AND HE HAD MET TROUBLE IN MANY FORMS. HE HAD HEARD STORIES OF THE RENEGADE BAND WHOSE DEPREDATIONS AND VIOLENCE TERRORIZED TRAVELERS AND SETTLERS ALIKE, BUT THIS WAS HIS FIRST MEETING WITH ANY OF THEM. . .

YOU TALK MIGHTY BIG, FELLER! RECKON SINCE YOU'RE SO SMART WE MIGHT KEEP YOU FOR A LITTLE SPORT. TAKE HIS GUN AN' TIE HIM UP, DRAGGING CANOE! WE'LL TAKE HIM BACK TO CAMP WITH US! AN' IF HE MAKES A MOVE, IT'LL SURE BE HIS LAST!



DAVY WAS USED TO THINKING QUICKLY IN EMERGENCIES, AND NOW HE WATCHED DRAGGING CANOE APPROACH. . .

THERE'S TWO OF THEM AN' ONE OF ME... AN' THEY'RE MIGHTY MEAN! IF DRAGGING CANOE ONCE GETS HIS HANDS ON ME, I'M DONE FOR!



WITH CAREFUL TIMING DAVY WAITED UNTIL DRAGGING CANOE WAS REACHING OUT TO GRAB HIS RIFLE. . .



THEN HE GRABBED DRAGGING CANOE'S ARM WITH LIGHTNING SPEED AND USING IT AS A LEVER. . .



JASPER WAS FIRING JUST AS DRAGGING CANOE'S BODY HIT HIM, MAKING THE SHOT GO WILD. . .



DAVY KNEW HE HAD TO FOLLOW UP HIS ADVANTAGE QUICKLY...SO...

I'M NOT FIGGERIN' ON GIVIN' YOU A CHANCE TO SHOOT AT ME AGAIN, MISTER / KEEP YOUR HAND OFF THAT RIFLE /



OH / MY ARM / I'LL FIX YOU FOR THIS /

YOU AIN'T SO HAPPY WHEN THE SHOE'S ON THE OTHER FOOT, ARE YOU?



REALIZING HIS OTHER ENEMY HAD GOTTEN HIS WIND BACK, DAVY WHIRLED JUST AS DRAGGING CANOE WENT INTO ACTION...

GET HIM, DRAGGING CANOE /





THIS TIME BEFORE THE INDIAN COULD RECOVER AND GET TO HIS FEET, DAVY HAD LEAPED ON HIM AND LIFTED HIM...

I'VE HEARD OF YOUR BAND AND I KNOW THE KIND OF HARM YOU PEOPLE SPREAD AROUND ... AND MAYBE SOME DAY YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU DESERVE!



THAT SIXTH SENSE WHICH WAS HIS BY INSTINCT AND TRAINING NOW MADE DAVY WHIRL IN TIME TO DODGE A BLOW MEANT TO FINISH HIM OFF...

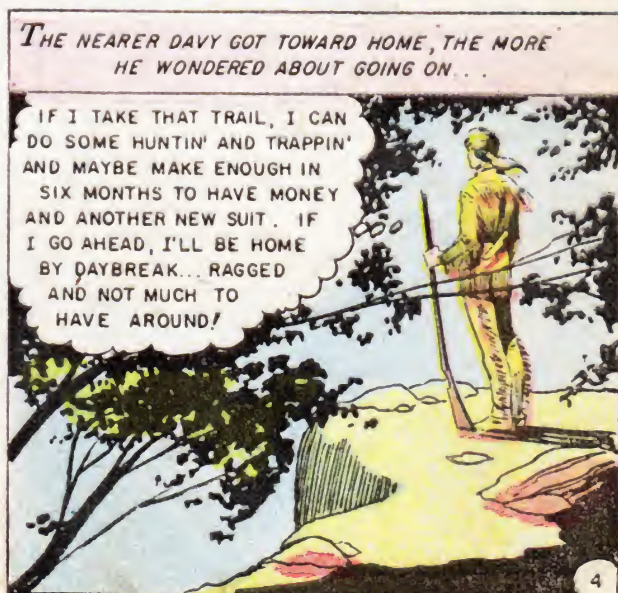
YIPES! THAT WAS A REAL SOCKDOLOGER, YOU RENEGADE RASCAL! LUCKY FOR ME YOUR ARM IS SLOWER THAN YOUR EYE!



AND ALTHOUGH EXCRUTIATING PAIN RAN THROUGH DAVY'S ARM AND SHOULDER, HE LASHED OUT...

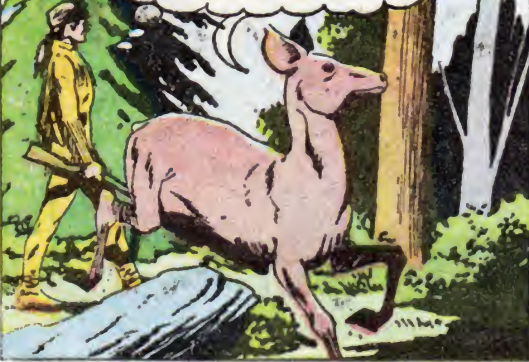
YOU'VE BEEN DELAYING ME LONG ENOUGH! WHEN I'M GOING AHEAD WITH SOMETHING, I GOT TO HAVE AWFUL GOOD REASONS FOR BEIN' STOPPED... AND YOU AIN'T A GOOD REASON!





WHEN IT CAME TO THE SHOWDOWN, DAVY WENT AHEAD---TOWARD HOME...

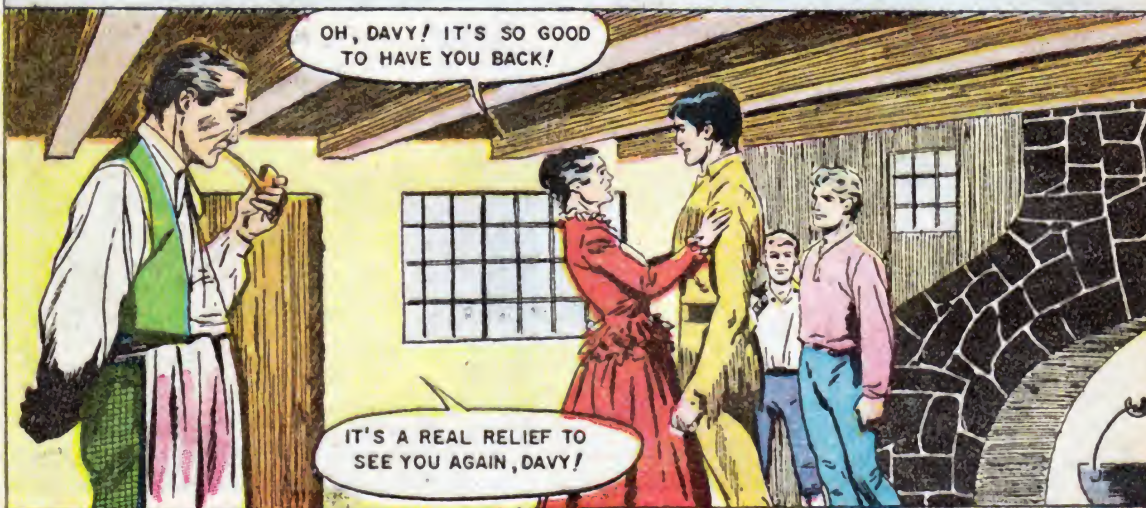
I GOT A HANKERIN' TO SEE MAW, AND MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS... FIND OUT HOW THINGS ARE GOING! THEN I AIM TO MAKE SOME MONEY, FIND ME A NICE GIRL, MARRY, AND SETTLE DOWN!



WON'T BE ANY REASON FOR PAW OR THE OTHERS TO BE MUCH PROUD OF ME, COMING HOME LIKE THIS... BUT NO REASON FOR THEM TO BE ASHAMED OF ME EITHER...



AT HIS FATHER'S TAVERN, THE WELCOME AWAITING DAVY WAS WARM AND REAL. BUT DAVY WAS CONCERNED AT THE WORRY IN HIS FATHER'S FACE.



OH, DAVY! IT'S SO GOOD TO HAVE YOU BACK!

IT'S A REAL RELIEF TO SEE YOU AGAIN, DAVY!

THE REST OF THE FAMILY ABE, DAVY AND HIS FATHER HAD A SERIOUS TALK...

DID YOU HAVE SOMETHIN' IN MIND WHEN YOU CAME HOME, DAVY?

TRUTH IS, I DID, PAW! SEEMS I'M OLD ENOUGH TO SETTLE DOWN. THOUGHT I'D EARN SOME MONEY, FIND ME A NICE GIRL FROM HEREABOUTS... AND GET MARRIED!



I WAS HOPIN' NOW THAT YOU WAS HOME, SON, YOU COULD HELP ME! THE TAVERN'S BEEN DOIN' POORLY, AN' I'M HEAVY IN DEBT. SCARCELY A NEIGHBOR I DON'T OWE MONEY.

IT AIN'T WHAT I HAD IN MIND, PAW... BUT I'LL SEE THAT YOUR DEBTS ARE PAID BEFORE I GO AHEAD WITH MY OWN PLANS.



IT WAS TWELVE LONG MONTHS OF WORKING ON NEIGHBORING FARMS FOR DAVY CROCKETT...

HERE YOU ARE, PAW! EVERY DAGNABBED CANCELED DEBT! I'VE WORKED A FULL YEAR DOIN' IT... AND NOW I'M GOING AHEAD WITH THOSE PLANS OF MY OWN!

YOU'RE A GOOD SON, DAVY... A GOOD SON!



DAVY WAS FREE AGAIN. HE HUNTED AND SOLD THE SKINS. HE ENTERED EVERY SHOOTING MATCH AND NOW ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS FIND THE RIGHT GIRL...

YOU COME TO TOWN TO SELL YOUR SKINS ...OR GO TO THE DANCE TONIGHT, DAVY?

BOTH, BASS. I COULDN'T'VE GONE TO THE DANCE WITHOUT ENOUGH SKINS TO PAY MY WAY!



THAT NIGHT DAVY MET THE GIRL WHO MADE HIS HEART JUMP. HER NAME WAS MARGARET ELDER...

SWING OLD ADAM, SWING OLD EVE, S'LUTE YOUR PARDNER, B'FORE YOU LEAVE...

YOU'RE TOO PRETTY TO BE REAL! I DON'T WANT TO SEEM TO BE RUSHING YOU, BUT YOU OUGHT TO KNOW I AIM TO MARRY YOU!

I GUESS ALL THOSE THINGS I'VE BEEN HEARING ABOUT YOU, DAVY CROCKETT, ARE TRUE AS GOSPEL!



A FEW WEEKS LATER, ON OCTOBER 22, 1805, DAVY RODE TO DANRIDGE TO GET A MARRIAGE LICENSE...

BUT DAVY, MARGARET HASN'T SAID SHE'D MARRY YOU! SHE'S GOT A LOT OF FELLERS HEARTBURNIN' OVER HER!

MARGARET WILL HAVE ME! IT WON'T MATTER TO HER THAT I CAN'T GIVE HER MUCH NOW!



LICENSE IN HAND, DAVY AND HIS FRIENDS SUDDENLY ENCOUNTERED BAD NEWS...

WE'RE GETTIN' A BAND TOGETHER TO GO AFTER JASPER MARKEL AN' HIS MURDERIN' CREW! THEY BEEN PLUNDERIN' THE COUNTRYSIDE! LAST NIGHT IT WAS A SETTLER AN' HIS WHOLE FAMILY OVER ON THE LITTLE FORK!

YOU WAIT TILL I GO TELL MARGARET WE CAN GET MARRIED WHEN I GET BACK, AND I'LL GO WITH YOU! THIS TIME WE'LL STOP MARKEL FOR GOOD!



MARGARET WASN'T AS EASY TO CONVINCE AS DAVY HAD THOUGHT SHE'D BE

YOU CERTAINLY TOOK A LOT FOR GRANTED, DAVY CROCKETT...GETTING A MARRIAGE LICENSE! AND THEN GALLOPING OFF WHEN YOU HAD PROMISED TO TAKE ME TO THE DANCE TOMORROW NIGHT!



'COURSE, WHILE I NEVER SAID I'D MARRY YOU, I NEVER SAID I WOULDN'T! BUT I CERTAINLY WON'T MARRY YOU IF YOU THINK CHASING AFTER THIS MARKEL IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN TO TAKE ME TO THE DANCE AND COURT ME!

BUT YOU'RE NOT SAFE WITH MARKEL'S BAND ON THE LOOSE! MAYBE WHEN I COME BACK, YOU'LL FEEL DIFFERENT!



THOUGH HIS HEART WAS HEAVY, IT WAS DAVY WHO LED THE GROUP TO THE RENEGADE'S HIDING PLACE...

I WAS SURE THEY'D PICK A SPOT LIKE THIS! AND THERE THEY ARE... AND THEY'VE GOT SOME POOR DEVILS TIED UP DOWN THERE!



A FEW MINUTES LATER, IN A SURPRISE ATTACK ON THE OUTLAWS' DRUNKEN CELEBRATION, THE FRONTIERSMEN CARRIED ON A HAND-TO-HAND BATTLE...

SO IT'S YOU, AGAIN! I BEEN WAITIN' FOR A CHANCE TO GET YOU!

YOU'VE KILLED YOUR LAST MAN, MARKEL!



BUT IT WAS ONE OF THE OTHER FRONTIERSMEN WHO PUT A BULLET INTO MARKEL AS THE OUTLAW AND DAVY STRUGGLED...

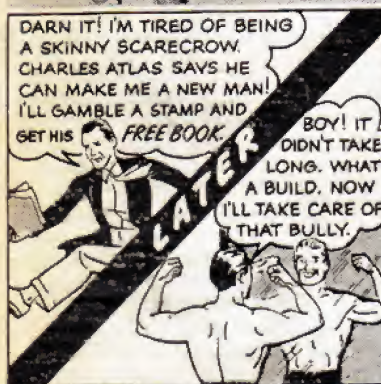


JASPER MARKEL, DRAGGING CANOE, AND THEIR WHOLE EVIL BAND WERE DEFEATED BY THE BRAVE LITTLE GROUP OF FRONTIERSMEN. BUT WHEN DAVY RETURNED HOME HE FOUND THAT MARGARET ELDER HAD MARRIED ANOTHER MAN WHILE HE WAS GONE! IT WAS A SHATTERING BLOW, BUT DAVY SOON REALIZED MARGARET WASN'T THE RIGHT GIRL AT ALL! IN DANDRIDGE THERE STILL EXISTS THE MARRIAGE BOND OF DAVY CROCKETT AND POLLY FINLEY... THE GIRL WHO PROVED TO BE THE RIGHT ONE!

MANY YEARS LATER AN OLDER DAVY CROCKETT WAS TO WRITE IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY A MOTTO HE HAD USED IN THE WAR OF 1812---AND THAT HAD BECOME A PART OF HIS LIFE...

I LEAVE THIS RULE FOR OTHERS WHEN I'M DEAD, BE ALWAYS SURE YOU'RE RIGHT--- THEN GO AHEAD!





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